

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 and 24-32 are pending in the application. No amendments are presented, thus no new matter is added.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-19, 24, 25 and 27-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Gennaro et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,317,834, herein Gennaro); Claims 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Gennaro in view of Wheeler (U.S. Pub. 2002/0026575); and Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Gennaro.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1-19, 24, 25 and 27-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Gennaro. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection as independent Claims 1, 7, 10, 12, 27 and 31 recite features clearly not taught nor rendered obvious by Gennaro.

Independent Claim 1, for example, recites an information providing device including a provider association unit configured to associate a plurality of information providers, including first and second information providers, the plurality of information providers providing respective user information items, the provider association unit comprising:

a first unit causing the first information provider to receive a first user information item, stored in a first information management unit, in response to a user information receiving request;

a second unit causing the second information provider to receive a second user information item, correlated with the first user information item and stored in a second information management unit, in response to a predetermined identification data; and

a third unit configured to generate an authentication ticket including data indicating at least one of an authentication provider name, a term of validity of the ticket, an authentication domain name, and user attributes by

combining the first user information item and the second user information item based on the predetermined identification data...

Independent Claims 7, 10, 12, 27 and 31, while directed to alternative embodiments, recite similar features. Accordingly, the remarks and arguments presented below are applicable to each of independent Claims 1, 7, 10, 12, 27 and 31.

Turning to the applied reference, Gennaro describes user authentication method (Fig. 4b) which uses an identifier 28, a password 30, and a biometric sample 32 to grant a user 26 access to a database.

Gennaro, however, fails to teach or suggest “generating an authentication ticket including data indicating at least one of an authentication provider name, a term of validity of the ticket, an authentication domain name, and user attributes by combining the first information item and the second user information item based on the predetermined identification data,” as recited in independent Claim 1.

In rejecting the above-noted features directed to generating an authentication ticket, the Office Action relies on col. 8, ll. 37-47 of Gennaro. This cited portion of Gennaro describes that a statistical equivalence score is generated from a comparison of a current biometric sample (S') with a decrypted biometric model (T). A decision is then made to determine if the computed score is acceptable. If not, the user's authorization state is declared as failed, otherwise, an acceptable score will result in granting the individual access.

The statistical equivalence score of Gennaro is different from a “authentication ticket including data indicating at least one of an authentication provider name, a term of validity of the ticket, an authentication domain name, and user attributes,” as recited in independent Claim 1. The score of Gennaro, conversely, is generated from a comparison of a current biometric sample (S') with the decrypted biometric model (T), and is merely compared with a threshold to determine if the user is granted access to the database.

The authentication ticket (e.g., “merge ticket” created by the merge provider 16) according to the claimed configuration is generated by combining the first user information item (e.g., “master primary ticket” created by the merge provider 16) and the second user information item (e.g., “authentication primary ticket” created by the password authentication provider 17). And the authentication ticket generated is used to limit the range of validity over the plurality of information providers. An exemplary embodiment of this process is disclosed at p. 37, l. 1 – p. 38, l. 18 and Fig. 9 of the specification. According to this claimed configuration, it is possible to carry out the user authentication in association with the plurality of authentication functions of the information providers and to guarantee the authentication of the user.

Gennaro fails to disclose any similar type of configuration. Therefore, Gennaro fails to disclose “*generating an authentication ticket including data indicating at least one of an authentication provider name, a term of validity of the ticket, an authentication domain name, and user attributes by combining the first user information item and the second user information item based on the predetermined identification data,*” as recited in independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claim 1 (and the claims that depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn. For substantially similar reasons, it is also submitted that independent Claims 7, 10, 12, 27 and 32 (and the claims that depend therefrom) patentable define over Gennaro.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 20-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Gennaro in view of Wheeler, these claims ultimately depend from independent Claim 12, and are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that Wheeler fails to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Gennaro.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the rejection of Claims 20-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-22 and 24-32 is definite and patentably distinguishing over the applied references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



James J. Kulbaski
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 34,648

Andrew T. Harry
Registration No. 56,959

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)

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